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NOTES AND DISCUSSIONS

AN EMENDATION OF CAESAR *BELLUM GALLICUM* VI. 30. 4

The disputed passage is: *sic et ad subeundum periculum et ad vitandum multum Fortuna valuit.* This is the reading of the α -class of manuscripts. In the β -class in place of *multum* we find *tumultum*; this is an unsatisfactory variant, which shows some close relation with the α -reading, and suggests that the scribe who wrote it felt the need of a noun in this place.

One can not escape the feeling that Caesar wrote a second accusative after *vitandum*, which in position and construction corresponded with *periculum*. Such a balanced structure is suggested by the repetition of *et ad*, as in other passages; e. g., *Bell. civ.* iii. 1. 3: *hoc et ad timorem novarum tabularum tollendum minuendumque . . . et ad debitorum tuendam existimationem*; when two gerundives limit a noun in common, it seems to be Caesar's usage to connect them simply with *et*, as in *Bell. Gall.* vii. 22. 1, *ad omnia imitanda et efficienda*, or with *-que*, as in the passage above cited from the *Bellum civile*. In other words, the use of *et ad . . . et ad* seems to particularize and differentiate two statements, like the English "in the first place," "in the second place." I do not find myself in agreement with those editors who refer *ad subeundum periculum* to Basilus and *ad vitandum* to Ambiorix. It was Basilus who was trying to seize the person of Ambiorix. How then could the lieutenant of Caesar be said to incur danger through the action of Fortune, when he was himself the aggressor? It is much more reasonable to say that Fortune suddenly plunged Ambiorix into danger and as suddenly extricated him from it.

For *multum* I suggest *mortem*; this word could easily be mistaken for *multum*, especially if there were influences which would make such a change natural. *sic et ad subeundum periculum et ad vitandam mortem Fortuna valuit* is not only a well-balanced sentence, according with Caesarian usage, but, standing as it does at the very end of the chapter, it epitomizes the contents of the chapter. Caesar remarks (§ 2): *multum cum in omnibus rebus tum in re militari potest Fortuna.* For this statement two reasons are given: (1) *nam sicut magno accidit casu, ut in ipsum incacatum etiam atque imparatum incidet . . .*; (2) *sic magnae fuit fortunae omni militari instrumento, quod circum se habebat, erepto, raedis equisque comprehensis ipsum effugere mortem.* First, Ambiorix,

unarmed, suddenly found himself facing the enemy; but, secondly, in spite of his dangerous position, he escaped death. How this happened is told in the two sentences following. Finally, the last sentence, with the reading I have suggested, is a distinct restatement of the power of Fortune exerted in these two particulars. To be sure, *ad vitandum* (sc. *periculum*) also summarizes the second statement, but not in the exact, direct manner Caesar is wont to employ.

Still, since the tendency of modern textual criticism is to retain the manuscript reading, wherever possible, I should not have had the temerity to suggest a change here if, in the first place, the text were sound, or if, in the second place, the *a*-reading accorded with good Latinity or even good sense. Standing as it does now, wedged in between *vitandum* and *Fortuna*, the adverb *multum* is in neither a natural nor an emphatic position. Caesar's favorite position for *multum* when used as an adverb limiting a verb is at the beginning of the sentence; e. g., *Bell. Gall.* vii. 84. 3, *multum ad terrendos nostros valet clamor*; *Bell. civ.* i. 61. 2, *quod multum Caesar equitatu valebat*. Other instances are *Bell. Gall.* v. 14.1; vi. 21.1; *Bell. civ.* i. 19. 3, 57. 3, 69. 2; ii. 38. 2; iii. 63. 7, 75. 3.

Again, an adverb like *multum*, or especially a comparative or superlative like *plus*, *minus*, *plurimum*, *tantum*, when used with *valere*, in a sense weakens the force of the verb, because it limits its degree. To say that Fortune was "quite" powerful or "more" powerful implies that its full power is not exerted. Now the escape of Ambiorix was due wholly to Fortune.

The scribe who committed the error of writing *multum* was unconsciously influenced to do so no doubt by a lingering memory of *multum . . . potest Fortuna* earlier in the chapter, where the emphatic *multum* made a strong impression on his mind. But there *multum* is quite proper. The meaning is that chance has a good deal to do with determining events; that is, that it often happens that chance determines them. In the sentence in question *multum* is not proper. This is the individual illustration. In this specific instance chance did not merely have a good deal of influence, it completely ruled. *multum* is in place in the general statement; it is out of place and weak in the special instance. To say *multum Fortuna valuit* would be equivalent to saying *Fortunā (periculum vitare) multum poterat (Ambiorix)*, which is absurd in this connection.

The phrase *fuga mortem vitare* is applied in a similar situation (*Bell. Gall.* v. 20) to Mandubracius.

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